

# COMMISIONERS PRESENT

Gil Palmer, Chairperson Ian Kohen, Vice Chairperson John Roberts, Secretary Trena Carter, Treasurer Greg Lewis John Stroh Tony McClendon Annette Barnes

# COMMISIONERS ABSENT

Rhea Baker-Ipek

### STAFF PRESENT

Frances Jordan, Deputy Director Betsy Schuette, Secretary

### **MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

# **GUESTS PRESENT**

Kelly Benjamin, City Attorney, Tim Shuffett, City Council Liaison, Sabel Long and Sierra Frey, observers from the Columbus Signature Academy and the children of staff member Schuette.

# **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

Commissioner Kohen moved that the March meeting minutes be approved as presented. Commissioner Stroh seconded. Motion carried. March minutes were approved.

# TREASURER'S REPORT

Betsy reported to the Commissioners that the Donations Account previous balance was \$5927.70. Currently, the Ticket Revenue is \$8790.00 and the Annual Dinner Expenses is \$9701.21 leaving a balance of \$5016.49. Discussion Ensued. A full detailed analysis of the Annual Dinner will be presented at next month's meeting.

# CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Chairperson Palmer wanted to extend a formal Welcome to the newest Commissioner Annette Barnes. The Commissioners and guests gave brief introductions.

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Deputy Director Jordan and Chairperson Palmer informed the Commission of the Warner Street incident which resulted in several complaints against the Columbus Police Department.

Deputy Director Jordan, Chairperson Palmer and Commissioner Kohen met with the African American Community Leaders who are concerned the complaints could potentially unravel all the work done to solidify the relationship between the African American community and the Columbus Police Department. Chairperson Palmer stated the meeting was more of a discussion of preventative measures and future processes to minimize if not eliminate these kind of interactions between the community and CPD. Deputy Director Jordan stated that the consensus of the group was the event was not necessarily a race driven incident, rather a procedure issue. More information will be given when all the details have been gathered. Chief Jason Maddix of the Columbus Police Department had stated the report would be available within the week and this will hopefully prove to the few who believe it could be a race issue. Pastor Bosley, Pastor Harris, Dennis Roberts, Frank Griffin, Cabrina Jackson, Gwen Wiggins and Suzy Gentry were in attendance.

# **OFFICE**

#### Cases:

- 1 CHRC Complaint filing and awaiting response from the Respondents
- 2 Filings with EEOC, 1 Disability and 1 Race
- 1 Filing with IOSHA under the Whistleblower division
- 1 Complaint Filed with the Department of Justice

#### Swearing-in:

Annette Barnes was sworn in as the newest member of the Human Rights Commission on April 19<sup>th</sup> by the Mayor.

# Annual Dinner:

- There were 390 tickets sold for the Annual Dinner.
- Director Smith emailed a copy of Will Miller's presentation to everyone but will be available on the website.
- Pictures of the Annual Dinner will also be available on the website in a slide show with music.

- Financial recap of the Annual Dinner will be provided at the next Commission meeting.
- An Evaluation Spreadsheet will be provided at the next Commission meeting, most evaluations were
  positive with the exception of those who felt there should be alcoholic beverages available at the dinner. This could be discussed/considered for future Annual Dinners.
- Deputy Director Jordan presented training at CSA Central for around 130 students. They are doing a project on Civil Rights and Human Rights. Commissioner Lewis and Betsy were also in attendance.
- The Art Work donated to the Human Rights Commission by Cummins was revealed at the Board of Works and was well received.
- Deputy Director Jordan attended a Conference on Equal Employment Law and found in interesting.

## **Upcoming:**

- MACDA-May 6<sup>th</sup> at 2pm.
- State of the City-May 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:00, Open house to follow. Commissioner attendance is necessary due to short staff and Adventure finale.
- Adventures into DiversCity Finale-May 14<sup>th</sup> at 5:30. Presenting the Grand Prize to the qualifying participant who attended the most events in each of the categories.
- CAMEO Annual Meeting will be May 8<sup>th</sup> at 5:15 at the Commons. Tracy Souza is the Keynote Speaker with booths set up from the different Associations as well a fashion show.
- New Commissioner Contact Sheets have been passed out if there are any corrections or changes that are need please make a note on the post it that Betsy has provided on the back and return to her.
- Commissioner Biography's in the Annual Report were very outdated. Deputy Director Jordan will be forwarding them to the Commissioners for updating.

# **Discussion:**

Staff requested suggestions from the Commissioners of ideas to improve Annual Dinner procedures;

- \*Escalator on or blocked off, one or the other.
- \*Explanation about what the Human Rights Commission does.
- \*No table at the top of the stairs to cause the bottle neck effect.
- \*Lists of previous Laws Awards Winners available as suggested by Owen Hungerford.
- \*The seating with Open confused those seating and attendees.
- \*Only putting open on the place cards and not table signs, giving the Commissioners a list with the open seats.

Commissioner can also begin thinking of Keynote Speakers for the 2014 Annual Dinner at little or no costs. Chairperson Palmer reported that Director Smith had surgery on April 19<sup>th</sup> and is now home and doing well.

### **LIAISON REPORT:**

Commissioner Lewis reported that he and Chairperson Palmer attended the April 17<sup>th</sup> CAMEO meeting. The Korean Association hosted the cultural presentation. Bob Pitman, Director of the Millrace Center and 2012 William R. Laws Award winner was the guest speaker. He spoke about looking at a partnership opportunity between CAMEO and the Millrace Center. He also discussed how Columbus is a great community for the senior citizens and Millrace is one of the largest in the state and potentially one of the leading senior centers in the country. Chairperson Palmer suggested attending, they give a historical perspective of the multi-culture as well as food.

Commissioner Roberts reported that there was a miscommunication about the previous meeting for the Transit Authority Board due to the way they schedule their meetings.

Commissioner Roberts also reported a Forum about Arab Spring on April 23<sup>rd</sup> in the Lecture Hall at the Columbus Learning Center. Mahamad Arafa will discuss the Egyptian revolution and Nora Basha will discuss the Syria revolution. Many community leaders and community members attended this which was followed by a question/discussion and Middle Eastern food. The Forum was hosted by the Middle East Association and the Islamic Society with sponsorships by Ivy Tech Community College and The Heritage Fund.

# **ADJOURNMENT:**

Commissioner Carter moved that the meeting be adjourned. Commissioner Roberts seconded. Motion carried meeting adjourned.